



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

*Office of Steven K. Reviczky
Commissioner*



Governor's Bill No. 5044, AN ACT CONCERNING DOMESTICATED HORSES

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture supports Governor Malloy's Bill No. 5044, AN ACT CONCERNING DOMESTICATED HORSES. It has been [estimated](#) that the state's equine population is as high as 51,671 horses, and that Connecticut has the third-highest horse population density in the nation.

The equine sector contributes significantly to the state's economy. Draft horses, breeding facilities, and farms producing hay and other equine feeds are an important segment of production agriculture. Boarding, training, and show facilities; trail riding stables; and agritourism-related businesses that providing hay-, carriage-, and pony-rides; as well as large animal veterinary practices and other businesses serving the equine sector also are important to Connecticut's economic health.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture had many members of the equestrian community express their strong concerns with the determination made by the court. Connecticut has a long history of support for the equine community, including codifying equestrian activities in the definition of agriculture as defined by Connecticut General Statutes section 1-1q.

This proposal would protect horse owners, many of whom are farmers, from prohibitively expensive liability associated with a 2012 appellate court ruling that horses are naturally vicious animals. The bill recognizes that horses are, in fact, domesticated animals, and should be regarded as such.